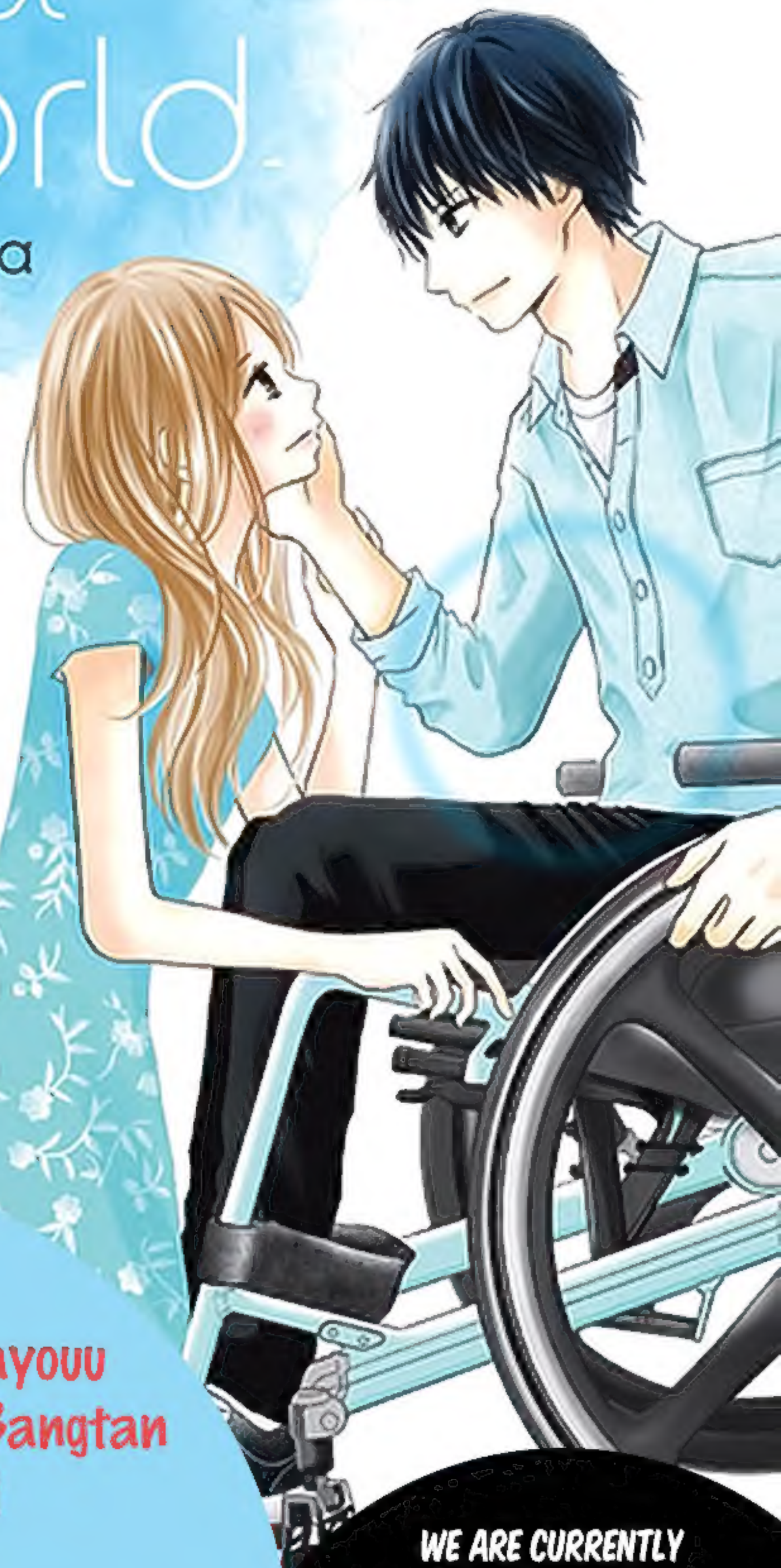
Perfect World

Rie Aruga



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perfect world

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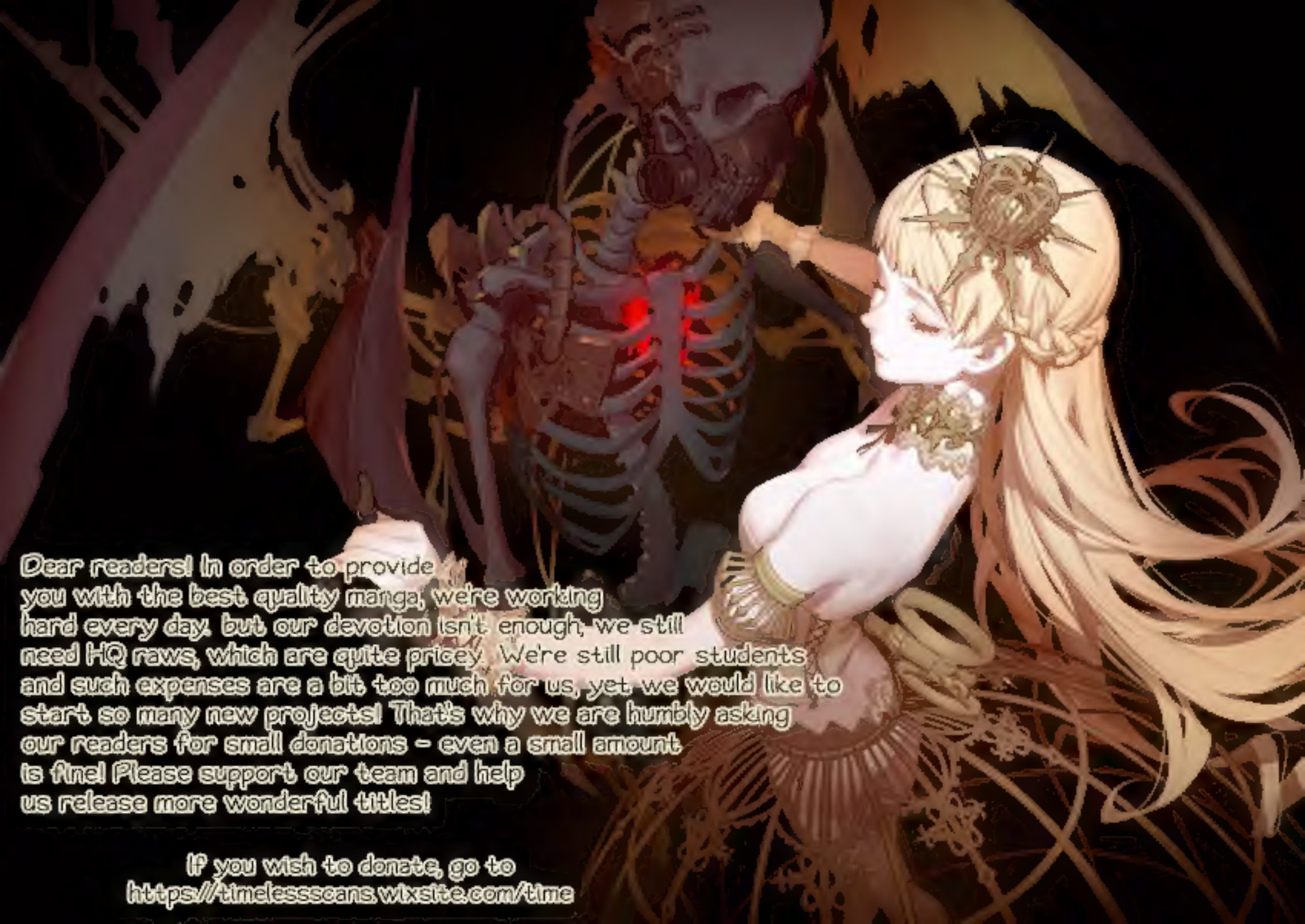
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ch5

Endless Love

The first time I went to a crowded street on a wheelchair--

after my legs were no longer able to walk...

I realised at that time

that the life I had been living, no longer existed.

The world is no longer

one I recognise.

However,

I always held this sort of thought.

Even if I am alone, I must continue living determinedly.

I had to become stronger.

Hence, I had no choice but to become stronger.

IN MY HEART, NO ONE CAN REPLACE A YUKAWA!!

I FOUND THAT THE ROPE WHICH WAS TIGHTLY BOUND TO ME, CAME APART.

AT THAT MOMENT,

I FELT LIKE--

I REAL-ISED

MAY BE WARMER THAN I THOUGHT--

THIS WORLD

GOOD.

STEAL IT, QUICK-- STEAL IT!

thump

thump

YES! IT'S BEEN A WHILE!

WAH-- MAIKA -CHAN!

HAVE YOU BEEN WELL LATELY?

TSUGUMI -SAN!!

.....

Grin

Grin

Grin

YEP, YEP.

HE'S REALLY GIVING IT HIS ALL.

I HEARD HE'LL BE COMPETING SOON?

HARUTO IS REALLY TALENTED ...

AH, YEAH.

THAT'S THE PLAN.

TSUGUMI -SAN, WILL YOU BE COMING TO THE BONENKAI* TODAY?

WITH AYUKAWA -SAN?

T/N: JAPANESE DRINKING PARTY HELD AT THE END OF THE YEAR (DECEMBER).

I'VE BEEN WONDERING FROM THE START ABOUT WHETHER YOU TWO WERE TOGETHER OR NOT.

SO IT REALLY IS LIKE THAT!

That night,

JUST AYUKAWA'S MOTHER.

WE DIDN'T TELL ANY OF OUR COLLEA-GUES,

WITH A CHOCKED UP VOICE, SHE SAID OVER THE PHONE,

"CONGRAT-ULATIONS", "THANK YOU".

AH, SURE.

TSUGUMI-SAN, I'D LIKE TO HAVE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS.

WE

Ayukawa and I decided to be together.

EVERYONE, CHEERS TO ONE YEAR OF HARD WORK!!

CHEERS!!

FINALLY TOOK

THE FIRST STEP.

YES, YES KAWANA-SAN ♡

NICE TO MEET YOU, I'M KAWANA.

AH,

I'M ISHIBA-SHI, HOW DO YOU DO?

IF I MAY BOLDLY ASK,

Coach's wife

Noisy

Noisy

COME, DRINK, DRINK!

BECAUSE ITSUKI NEVER TELLS US ANYTHING

I DRINK MYSELF, I DON'T NEED YOU TO ASK...

WELL,

YOU TWO WERE CLASS-MATES, RIGHT?

I ALSO HEARD YOU TWO ARE WORKING TOGETHER.

EH ...

WHEN DID THE TWO OF YOU START DATING?

TRUE...

WE'RE GOING TO BE INTERROGATED THE SAME WAY IN THE OFFICE.

...I FEEL THAT

RIGHT NOW, THERE'S NO PLACE THAT ALLOWS DISABLED PEOPLE TO SURF,

BUT, AMERICA HAS A WHEELCHAIR SURFING SPOT.

I HAVEN'T PLAYED FOR A LONG TIME SINCE MY INJURY, BUT I RECENTLY STARTED AGAIN.

IT'S AN OLD HOBBY OF MINE.

I'M PLANNING ON GOING SURFING.

WHAT ABOUT ISHIBASHI-SAN'S FAMILY?

WE'RE GOING BACK TO OUR HOMETOWN.

DO YOU GUYS HAVE ANY PLANS FOR NEW YEARS?

SURFING?!

OF COURSE, WE'RE FROM NAGANO AFTER ALL.

I'VE SEEN QUITE ENOUGH OF MOUNTAINS AND WHAT NOT.

GOING TO THE SEA IS GREAT!

WATCHING THE WATER MAKES ME FEEL RELAXED.

AYUKAWA'S BASKET BALL CLUB,

IS FULL OF SUCH PASSONATE PEOPLE---...

THAT'S AWESOME---!

IT IS DEEPLY ENGRAVED IN MY MEMORIES, EVEN TO THIS DAY.

STANDING IN THE LIGHTHOUSE, OVERLOOKING THE MAGNIFICENT WAVES OF THE OCEAN, WAS REALLY ASTONISHING TO SEE.

EHH---

THAT WAS MY FIRST TIME SEEING THE SEA.

WHEN I WAS IN 3RD GRADE,

MY PARENTS TOOK ME TO ENOSHIMA

YEAH

BUT IT'S NOT THAT YOU CAN'T GO.

THERE'S A SEA OF PEOPLE AND LOTS OF SLOPES AND STAIRS.

IF YOU GO THERE, IT'LL BE QUITE TROUBLE-SOME...

IF AYUKAWA -SAN AND KAWANA-SAN ARE OKAY WITH IT...

LET'S GO HARUTO!

EH, THEN I WANT TO GO!!

IF YOU GO TOGETHER AND HELP EACH OTHER, IT SHOULD BE FINE.

TO ENOSHIMA?

THEN LET'S GO NEXT TIME.

I WANT TO SEE IT TOO.

AWESOME —!! WE'RE GOING TO ENOSHIMA—!!

NO PROB-LEM—

BUT TAKING CARE OF US WON'T BE EASY FOR YOU TWO...

THEN LET'S GO...?

SHE'S A NICE GIRL,

ITSUKI.

YOUTH-FUL & VIBRANT.

YOU USED TO BE YOUNG ONCE--

HOW NICE TO BE YOUNG ...

Ah

Even her steps are bouncing.

OH, REALLY?

Squeal

Squeal

Can't wait

YEAH,

BUT TO BE HONEST,

I STILL FEEL IN-SECURE WITH THE WAY WE ARE NOW.

EVERYONE HAS TO GET THROUGH THAT TO GET TO THE OTHER SIDE,

WHETHER HEALTHY OR DISABLED.

THAT WAY OF THINKING IS NORMAL SINCE THE PATH IS QUITE BUMPY.

Wah

Ahahaha

WHAT WAS THAT—

THAT'S JUST LIKE ISHIBANA ONEE-SAN*!

ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT LOVE IS BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE OF ITS IM-PERFECT-IONS.

THAT'S RIGHT, ITSUKI.

PLUS, I

PR NOTE: OLDER SISTER; CAN BE USED GENERALLY TO REFER TO A FEMALE OLDER THAN ONESELF.

WHAT IS THAT SORT OF LOVE LIKE...?

MORE BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE OF ITS IMPERFECTIONS...

Thank you for your hardwork.

Happy New Year!

THAT STUBBORN ITSUKI ACTUALLY BROUGHT HIS GIRLFRIEND... REALLY SURPRISED ME!

BUT SEEING HIM LIKE THIS, I CAN WORRY LESS.

SURE WILL!

THANK YOU!

HAVE A GOOD TIME!

Enoshima

YOU'RE WELCOME ANYTIME...

NEXT TIME, CAN I TALK WITH YOU MORE?

—ISHIBANA-SAN,

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU MUST ASK HIM.

BUT IF YOU FEEL INSECURE OR WORRIED AT ANY TIME,

YOU MUST TALK TO HIM FIRST.

YES

WAH—!!

I SEE IT——!!

HARUTO REALLY LOOKS MORE CHEER-FUL...

AFTER BEGIN-NING TO PLAY BASKET BALL.

...

WHAT IS THAT? IS IT NICE?

I REALLY WANT TO EAT TAKOSENBEI* ...

IT'S A CRACK-ER WITH A WHOLE SQUID INSIDE.

HE REALIS-ED THAT HE'S NOT ALONE.

PLUS,

THAT'S BECAUSE HE FOUND SOMETHING HE CAN IM-MERSE HIM-SELF IN.

I ALSO EXCHANGED PHONE NUMBERS WITH ISHIBANA-SAN'S WIFE.

REALLY?

HIS WIFE IS REALLY NICE.

SHE GIVES OFF AN "ONEE-SAN" VIBE

Hahah

SOMETIMES,

I WOULD ALSO FEEL LIKE I'M THE ONLY UNLUCKY ONE IN THE WORLD.

BUT WHEN I'M PLAYING BASKETBALL WITH THE OTHERS, THOSE THOUGHTS STOP.

Tankosenbei~!!

These foods all look so adorable~

adorable?

THE SCENERY THERE DOESN'T LOOK BAD.

SHALL WE TRY THE FORK IN THE ROAD OVER THERE?

FROM HERE ONWARDS,

IT'LL BE REALLY DIFFICULT ...

AS LONG AS THERE ARE NO STAIRS, ANYWHERE WILL BE FINE.

LET'S GO.

AH——!!

YEAH,

MORE LIKE I WAS FORC-ED.

THE REHAB DOCTOR WAS A DEMON.

YOU HAD TO GO THROUGH SLOPE TRAINING?

MAKES ME THINK OF REHAB...

CRAP,

WHY IS THIS SLOPE SO STEEP?

Pant Pant

Pant Pant

YEAH.

ARE YOU TWO OKAY?

WE APPRECI-ATE YOUR THOUGHT-FULNESS!

IT'S OKAY. WE'LL MANAGE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

AH,

Ah, I can help!

SOME-ONE HURRY UP AND HELP!

OH MY, POOR DEARS!

HOW NICE……

ACTUALLY, IF YOU GO TO THE TOP, THE VIEW IS EVEN MORE SPECT-ACULAR.

IT'S ALREADY BEAUTIFUL HERE.

I THINK SO TOO!

I THINK IT'S GOOD HERE TOO!

THE FACT THAT WE CAN TRAVEL TOGETHER IS REALLY GREAT, MAIKA.

I FEEL LIKE IT WAS A GOOD CHOICE COMING HERE.

RIGHT?

TOUCHED

Hugs Tightly

SURE, GO AHEAD.

CAN I GO TAKE A LOOK?

AH, THERE'S A SOUVENIR STORE!

We will wait here and relax a bit...

YES!!

IT'S WONDER-FUL!!

TRUE,

I CAN SERIOUSLY FEEL THEIR ENERGY!

Hahaha

I SUPPOSE WE WERE LIKE THAT IN HIGH SCHOOL TOO.

THEY'RE REALLY FULL OF ENERGY!

I'M ALSO QUITE TIRED—

TOMOR-ROW MY MUSCLES WILL DEFIN-ITELY BE SORE...

CRAP,

Noisy

Noisy

Chatter

UM,

KAWANA ...

A SOUV-ENIR

WHAT'S THIS?

.....

EH ...

TO COMME-MORATE THE START OF US DATING.

WOW ...

IT'S SO--

BEAUTI-FUL...

TRY IT ON.

EVEN THOUGH IT'S NOT AN EXP-ENSIVE THING,

WHEN IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY, I'LL GIVE YOU A BETTER PRESENT.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, WHEN IS KAWANA'S BIRTHDAY?

OHH—

NICE, NICE!

WHEN I SAW IT, I THOUGHT IT WOULD REALLY SUIT YOU.

.....

I...

AYUKAWA,

BECAUSE YOU'RE SO GENTLE,

I'M THINKING WHETHER IT'S BE-CAUSE

I'M ALWAYS PESTER-ING YOU,

I'M ACTUALLY A LITTLE

INSECURE.

AND YOU DON'T WANT TO REJECT ME OUTRIGHT, SO THAT'S WHY YOU DECIDED TO BE WITH ME.

...THUS I'M A—

ha ha

I'M A LITTLE IN-SECURE...

AYUKAWA

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME BE YOUR GIRLFRIEND.

BECOMING YOUR GIRLFRIEND IS REALLY GREAT...

TO BE ABLE TO COME TO ENOSHIMA WITH YOU IS REALLY GREAT

I bite
I bite
HEY
NO MORE.
HAA
I don't care anymore
I'M SO TIRED...
yawn
TIME TO SLEEP, KENZO
QUICKLY GO INTO YOUR LIT TLE MOUSE
meow
YET SHE WAS SO EAS- ILY TOUCHED.
IT WAS JUST A SMALL PRESENT...
.....
neh

TREASURE HER

I MUST

I MUST TREAT HER WELL...

LET HER BE HAPPY...

IT WAS A DREAM...

...HAA

sound asleep

sound asleep

sit up

open

.....

JUST HOWEVER.

PLUS THERE'S A KIND LADY THAT COMES BY TO HELP.

HOW DO YOU NORMALLY DO YOUR HOUSE CHORES?

SORRY THAT YOU HAVE TO CLEAN.

IT'S FINE, NO PRO-BLEM.

HMM?

IF WE LIVED TOGETHER, I CAN HELP YOU DO A LOT MORE...

SHOULD I TELL THAT TO HIM?

EH, THEN CAN I SEE?

UP TO YOU...

AH, YEAH.

FROM MY CHILD-HOOD...

OH,

IS THIS AN ALBUM?!

YEAH.

YOUR FATHER?

YOU LOOK A LOT LIKE YOUR DAD.

like father like son

ISN'T IT?

I ALSO HAVEN'T SEEN THESE PHOTOS IN A WHILE.

ke ke ke

SO CUTE—— AYUKAWA, YOU'RE SO ADORABLE——!!

WAHHH——!!

COULD IT BE WHEN YOU FIRST WENT TO ENOSHIMA AND SAW THE OCEAN?

AH, THIS PHOTO.

.....

What?

Didn't you see mine already?

YOUR CHILD-HOOD PHOTOS.

WHAT?

NEXT TIME, LET ME SEE KAWANA'S AS WELL.

AH...UH

YOU REALLY WANT TO SEE——...?

sit up...

THUMP

AYUKAWA

AYUKAWA...

YEAH?

IT'S TIME TO CLOSE THE WINDOW,

ELSE IT'LL GET TOO COLD.

AH, OKAY. YOU'RE RIGHT.

.....

IS IT MY

MISCON-CEPTION...

I FEEL AS IF HE KEEPS LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW

ABSENT-MINDEDLY

EVEN THOUGH IT'S A DIFFERENT FEELING TO WHEN HE REJECTED ME IN THE PAST...

I FEEL AS IF...

YEAH?

AYUKAWA.

AYU-KAWA...

.....

YOU MUST TALK TO HIM FIRST.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU MUST ASK HIM.

IF YOU'RE VEXED OR FEELING SAD,

YOU MUST PLEASE TELL ME.

NO MATTER WHAT IT IS.

I...

I MIGHT BE SLOW IN MANY AREAS...

BUT I CAN AT LEAST FEEL WHEN THE ONE I LIKE

IS IN LOW SPIRITS...

WHY DO YOU SUDDENLY SAY THAT?

.....

turns head

:

put flat

:

slide down

KAWANA,

SO I'M A LITTLE TIRED.

I'VE BEEN HAVING DREAMS LATELY,

IT'S FINE...

SORRY, I MADE YOU WORRY.

CAN'T SLEEP?

.....

NIGHT-MARES?

I CAN'T REALLY DIFFER-ENTIATE...

WHETHER THOSE DREAMS ARE GOOD OR NIGHT-MARES...

...HOW TO EX-PLAIN...

BUT THE EVENTS KEEP REPLAY-ING IN MY DREAMS.

I DON'T KNOW WHE-THER IT'S BECAUSE I WAS TOO HAPPY,

THE KAWANA IN MY DREAMS WAS ALWAYS SMILING.

THE TRIP TO ENOSHIMA LAST TIME WAS ENJOYABLE.

THE KAWANA WHO RECEIVED MY GIFT

WAS REALLY ADORABLE.

I

STOOD AT THE VERY TOP.

AND ADMIRED THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY WITH YOU.

BUT THE BACKGROUND SCENERY

WAS DIFFE-RENT TO WHAT WE SAW AT ENOSHIMA.

DREAMS MERGED WITH MY MEMORIES.

I CLIMBED UP THE STAIRS THAT WERE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO CLIMB...

AND THEN MY EYES OPEN,

AND I NOTICE MY LEGS STILL CAN'T MOVE.

GRADUALLY DISAPPEARED WITH TIME.

THOSE DELUSIONAL DREAMS,

"EH?!"

"I'M ALREADY BETTER!!"

"I CAN WALK!!"

THE 'ME' IN MY DREAM WAS VERY HAPPY.

AFTER THE CAR ACCIDENT,

I WOULD OFTEN HAVE DREAMS WHERE I COULD WALK.

THE MORE I THINK THAT

BUT, THE STRONGER THESE HAPPY FEELINGS ARE,

I FEEL THAT I'M VERY FORTUNATE.

BEING WITH YOU, MAKES ME FEEL REALLY HAPPY.

IF I COULD WALK, I COULD SEE SO MORE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY WITH YOU.

IF I COULD WALK, I COULD DO SO MANY MORE THINGS WITH YOU.

THE CURRENT ME CAN DO SO LITTLE FOR YOU. I HATE THIS ME YET THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.

THAT THOUGHT IS ALMOST DRIVING ME INSANE.

I REALLY WANT TO STAND AGAIN.

I CAN FEEL

THROUGH HIS WARMTH,

THE PAIN IN HIS HEART TOPPLE THE MOUNTAIN WHILE MOVING IN.

I still want to know more about him.

Even if they are things I don't know yet or things I may not understand,

At that moment,

that was what I thought.